

Fire Department

Mission. The Fire Department attempts to minimize, through prevention, education and fire suppression activities, the loss of life and property resulting from fires, medical emergencies and other disasters.

Overview. The Department provides fire suppression and emergency response from 18 stations strategically located throughout Wichita. The Department is organized in two Divisions: Operations and Administration/Prevention.



The City operates 18 stations with at least two pieces of equipment at each station staffed by firefighters 24 hours each day.

In addition to the administrative staff located at City Hall, the Department operates a training facility, training an average of 18 recruits annually, as well as providing ongoing training of fire suppression staff. Maintenance of fire buildings and apparatus is coordinated through a central maintenance facility. A staff of seven is responsible for maintaining 20 buildings and over 50 pieces of fire apparatus. In a joint venture with the Sedgwick County Fire District 1, two County staff work with City staff to maintain fire equipment, resulting in economies of scale and cross-utilization. The County reimburses the City for all related expenditures.

The Department maintains a five-member Arson Investigation unit that investigates all suspicious fires. Arson investigators also assist in the inspection function with five other inspector positions. Three positions are dedicated to public education and prevention.

Finance and Operations. The 1999 and 2000 budgets reflect a continuation of the current level of suppression and prevention activities. In addition, amounts are budgeted to enhance equipment, supplies and building maintenance for field operations. The enhancements are partly financed through savings generated from consolidating office space and civilianizing positions.

The budget includes the civilianization of one position and the transfer of three positions. A vacant Division Chief position is reclassified to an Assistant to the Chief

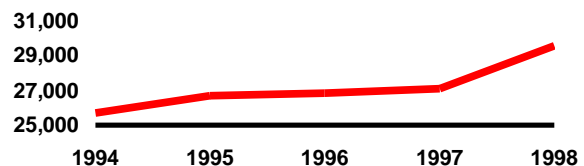
position. The civilian position will enhance financial and management oversight and accountability.

Three plan examiners are transferred to the Office of Central Inspection. A transfer from the Central Inspection Fund to the General Fund has funded these positions. In the future, they will be funded directly within the Central Inspection Fund. While the positions are filled with the incumbent commissioned staff, they will remain under the supervision of the Fire Chief. As vacancies occur, the positions will be civilianized and integrated into OCI, enhancing inspection efficiencies.

A 46-year-old training office will be closed in 2000 and the savings re-invested in maintenance at other fire facilities. Five employees who will be relocated to other fire facilities use the satellite office. The move is estimated to save \$10,000 annually.

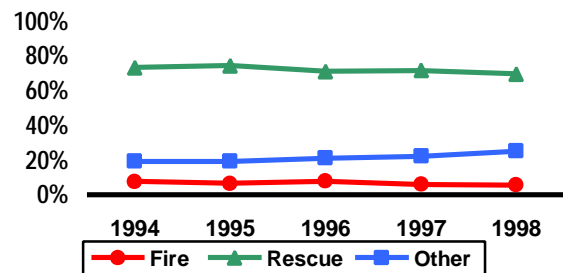
The Fire Operations budget includes over \$20 million to fund the wages of 348 firefighters who provide 24 hour emergency response to City residents through the network of 18 stations. Firefighters respond to over 29,000 alarms each year, including 1,550 fires and nearly 20,000 medical alarms.

**Fire Department Alarms
1994 - 1998**



Performance of the fire suppression staff is measured in a variety of ways. Response time is maintained at a reasonable level through the number and location of stations, and by fully funding overtime, holiday pay and personal service costs. The budget includes over \$1.1 million for overtime and holiday pay, to ensure stations

Types of Alarms as a Percent of Total Alarms



are fully staffed. The department is able to contain fires to the room of origin 90 percent of the time and to reduce the dollar value of property loss through utilization of proper equipment and aggressive fire attack.

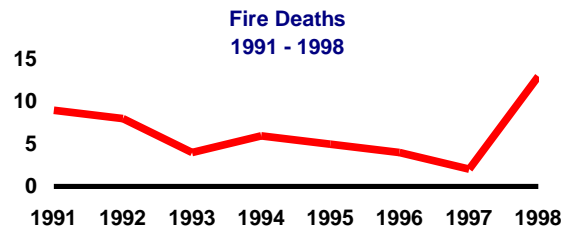
The budget provides increased resources for field operations, including an additional supervisory vehicle. Enhanced funding is also included for additional foam (used on fuel fires), new life jackets (for firefighter safety during flooding emergencies), replacement of Jaws of Life units and slip-in pumps, and new ladders and hoses.

Selected Performance Measures			
	1998	1999	2000
Average Response time (min)	4.12	4.10	4.10
Percent of fires contained to room of origin	91%	90%	90%
Average dollar loss per fire	\$7,200	\$3,400	\$3,400
Number of blood pressure screenings	14,830	15,000	15,000

The Fire Department also includes various special teams, including a hazardous materials team, and heavy rescue and water rescue teams. In addition, as part of a neighborhood outreach effort, free blood pressure screens are provided and firefighters often participate in neighborhood events.

Primarily the population drives the number of fire stations and their location growth trends within Wichita. City staff,

with consultant assistance, is studying the issue of relocating fire stations to more efficiently serve Wichitans. The budget includes \$6 million to fund required relocations. In addition to relocating stations, the five-year financial forecast anticipates an increased need for fire stations in the near future.



The budget continues funding for a coordinated City/County maintenance operation. Since 1996, the City has coordinated maintenance activities for both City and County apparatus, resulting in savings for both entities. The County will reimburse the City \$126,000 in 2000 for costs associated with maintenance activities.

The budget consolidates Prevention and Administration activities. The move will provide increased utilization of staff, primarily clerical positions. In addition, the Prevention structure will be examined, with a focus on eliminating bureaucracy and enhancing front line service. The prevention functions of the department will continue to emphasize reducing the number of fire related deaths, done primarily through public education efforts.

Fire Department Budget Summary					
	1998 Actual	1999 Adopted	1999 Revised	2000 Adopted	2001 Approved
Personal Services	20,197,205	20,855,390	20,774,630	22,023,480	22,880,770
Contractual Services	837,671	879,340	882,020	858,820	872,180
Commodities	577,996	591,170	613,230	594,410	594,100
Capital Outlay	225	40,610	59,300	45,100	40,100
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Total Fire Department Expenditures	21,613,097	22,366,510	22,329,180	23,521,810	24,387,150
Grant funds	0	0	16,810	0	0
General Fund	21,613,097	22,366,510	22,329,180	23,521,810	24,387,150
Total Fire Department Resources	21,613,097	22,366,510	22,345,990	23,521,810	24,387,150
Position Summary					
Total commissioned	375	375	374	371	371
Total civilians	13	13	14	14	14
Total FTE	388	388	388	385	385